# THE GREAT STONE FACE

*By*

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

*REVISED*

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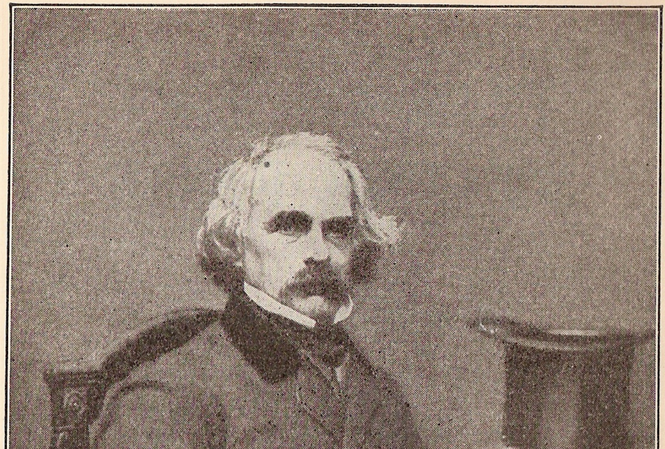


Nathl Hawthorne

# NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

### [1804-1864]

### *An Introduction by* WILLIAM J. PELO

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, with the exception of Poe, ranks as the greatest American short-story writer. He was born in Salem, Massachusetts, in the ancestral home founded by William Hawthorne who came from England to the New England Colony with John Winthrop in 1630. He graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825, a classmate of Longfellow. He was of a retiring disposition, abnormally shy and sensitive.

After leaving college he spent the following twelve years in Salem. Hawthorne had already determined to lead a literary life, and spent his time in writing a series of short stories, and the novel, *Fanshawe.* In 1837 he won his first success as a writer, when the first series of *Twice-Told Tales* was published. But he received small remuneration from his first book, and was forced to accept a position in the custom-house at Boston. At the end of two years he lost this position by change of administration, and lived for a time at Brook Farm with the Transcendentalists. From Brook Farm he moved to Concord, married, and settled down at the "Old Manse." Here he wrote the second series of *Twice-Told Tales*, and *Mosses from an Old Manse.*

After four years at Concord, Hawthorne moved to Salem, and became surveyor of customs. During the years at Salem he wrote *The Scarlet Letter*, probably the most vital piece of fiction written by an American. Henry James says: "*The Scarlet Letter* is the finest piece of imaginative writing yet put forth in this country."

Hawthorne had, at last, found himself as a writer. *The Scarlet Letter* was followed a year later by *The House of the Seven Gables*, and then, shortly afterward, *The Wonder Book*, *Grandfather's Chair*, *The Snow Image*, *The Blithedale Romance*, and *Tanglewood Tales*.

While at work on his novels he found time to write a biography of Franklin Pierce, then candidate for president. After election Pierce appointed him consul at Liverpool where Hawthorne remained for four years. He traveled for two years on the continent and returned to this country in 1860, broken in health, with unsettled mind, unable to write. He failed rapidly in health, and died in 1864.

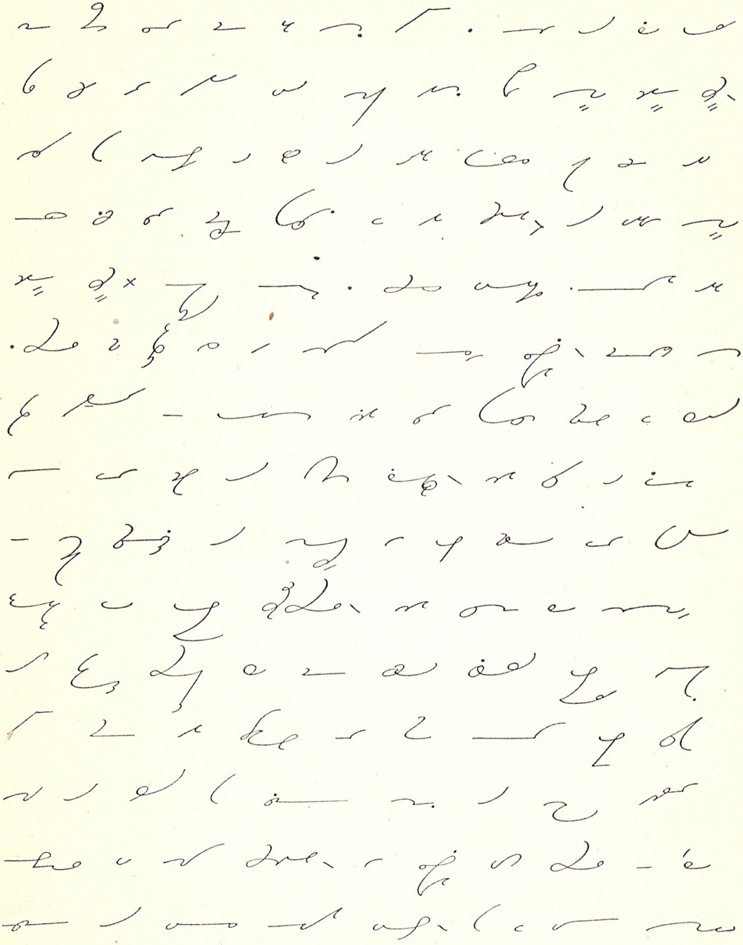
In his writings Hawthorne interpreted old New England life, in which all his interests centered. His novels possess an individual charm and skill found in few writers of his time. We have said that Hawthorne loved seclusion, and yet he came in contact with life through his various fields of activity, and through travel. His notebooks show his interest in people in the entries they contain of observations of character, and new ideas for stories. Hawthorne was an artist in the use of words to paint pictures. Most of his stories are built around a great truth. *The Great Stone Face* is of this type. As a piece of pure diction it is worthy of notice; the portrayal of character is wonderfully conceived; and the advance to the climax is gripping.

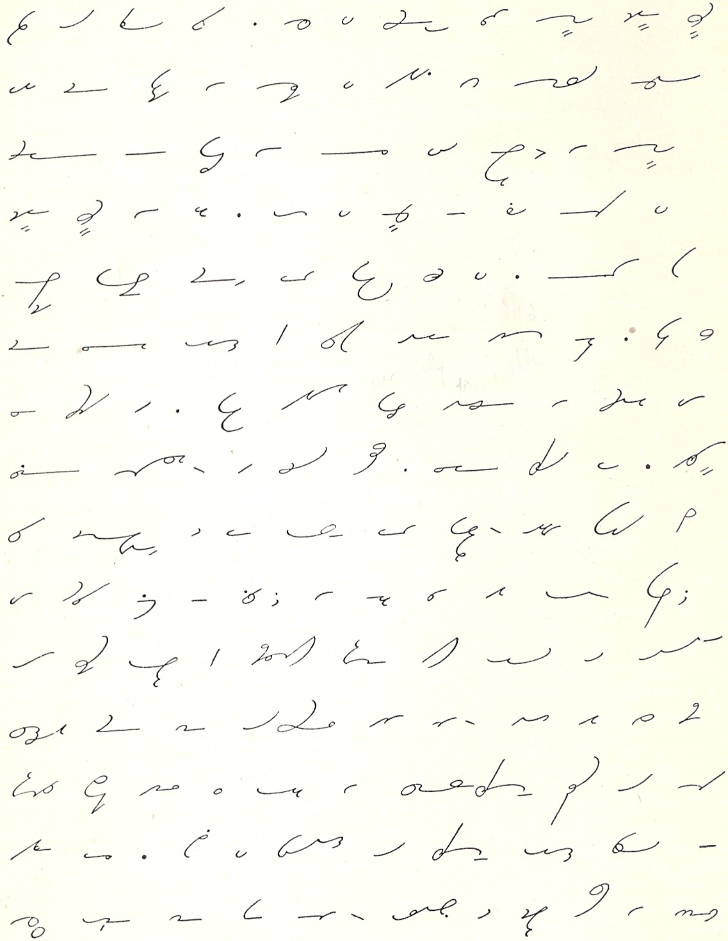
This story has been called the finest piece of allegory ever written. That natural phenomenon, the stone face of Profile Mountain, New Hampshire, appealed to Hawthorne's imagination. The author represents the boy Ernest as awaiting the fulfilment of the prophecy that a great man should come who would resemble the stone face. The people look for him in "Gathergold," then in "Old Blood-and-Thunder," and in "Old Stony Phiz"; but at last they recognize him in Ernest himself.

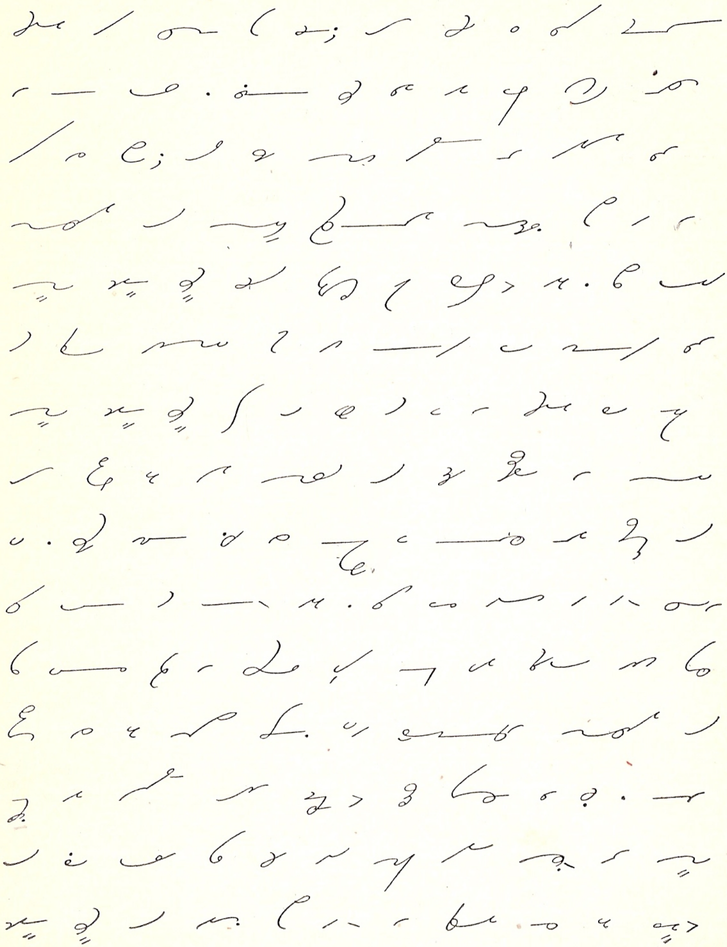
The story has four periods; it carries the boy Ernest through boyhood, young manhood, middle age, and old age. In each period the author shows the false ideal that is likely to mislead—wealth (Gathergold), military glory, (Old Blood-and-Thunder), eloquence, (Old Stony Phiz), and genius, (The Poet). But into the story he weaves the highest ideal—character, which grows to completeness as the life of Ernest continues and he becomes preacher and seer. He endows Ernest with a fixed purpose, a goal, and he carries him on through life until people see in the old man Ernest a resemblance to "The Great Stone Face."

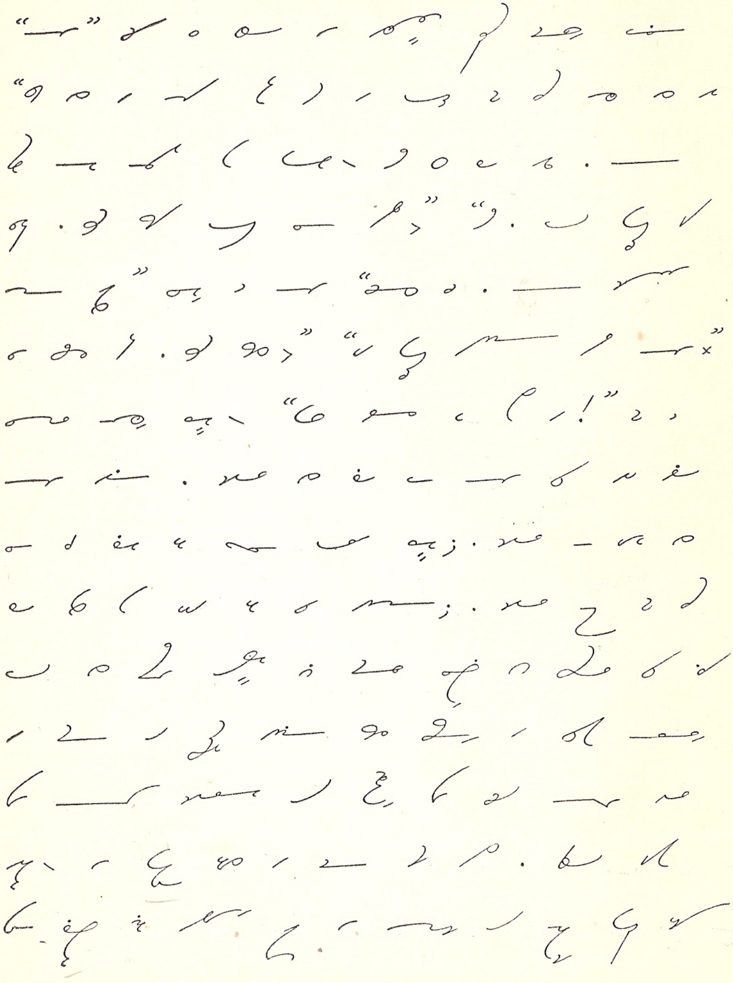
The characters are real people of certain types. Some one has said that *The Great Stone Face* as embodied in Ernest, finds its real pattern in Ralph Waldo Emerson, while Andrew Jackson was the real "Old Blood-and-Thunder" and Daniel Webster, "Old Stony Phiz." The great lesson of the story is the value of an ideal and a standard of life. It is interesting to follow the growth of Ernest from youth to the fine old man with the gleam of intelligence in his eyes, his quiet simple ways, without pretence, meeting each man as if he were receiving more than he could bestow.

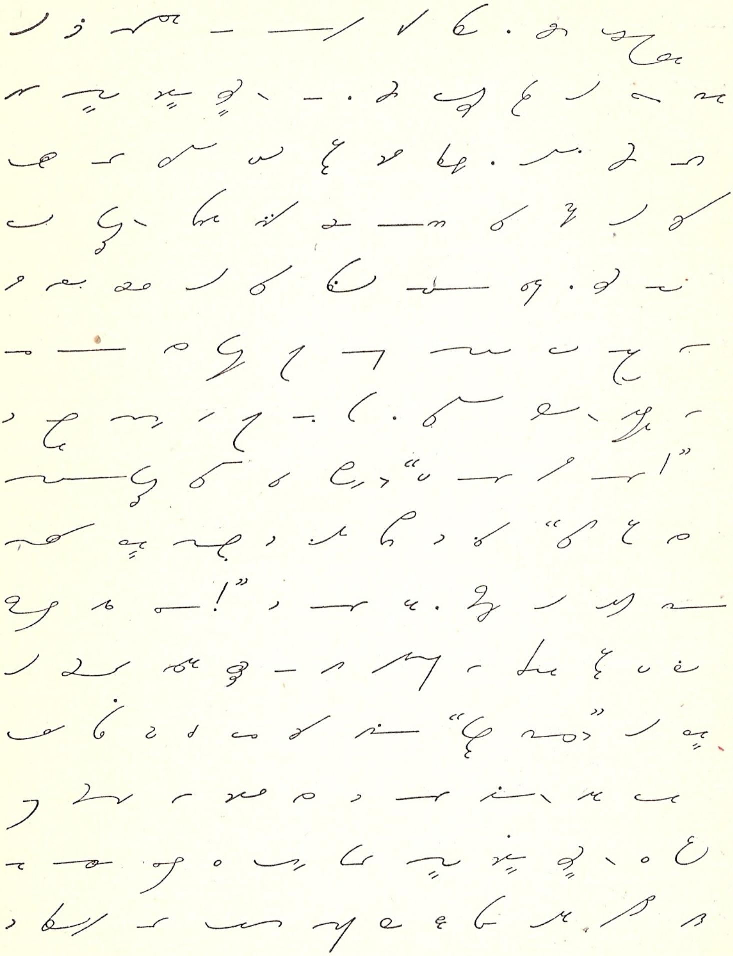
The reading of English Classics in shorthand is an especially valuable supplement to the class work in English Literature. The reading in shorthand, and the repeated writing of the story from dictation, will not fail to impress it upon the student's mind as no other form of recitation can do. At the same time the shorthand student will be acquiring a valuable vocabulary, and an acquaintance with sentence structure derived from the very best sources. Interest, then literary appreciation, enlarged vocabulary, and, finally, shorthand, are the reward of the correlation of literature with shorthand.

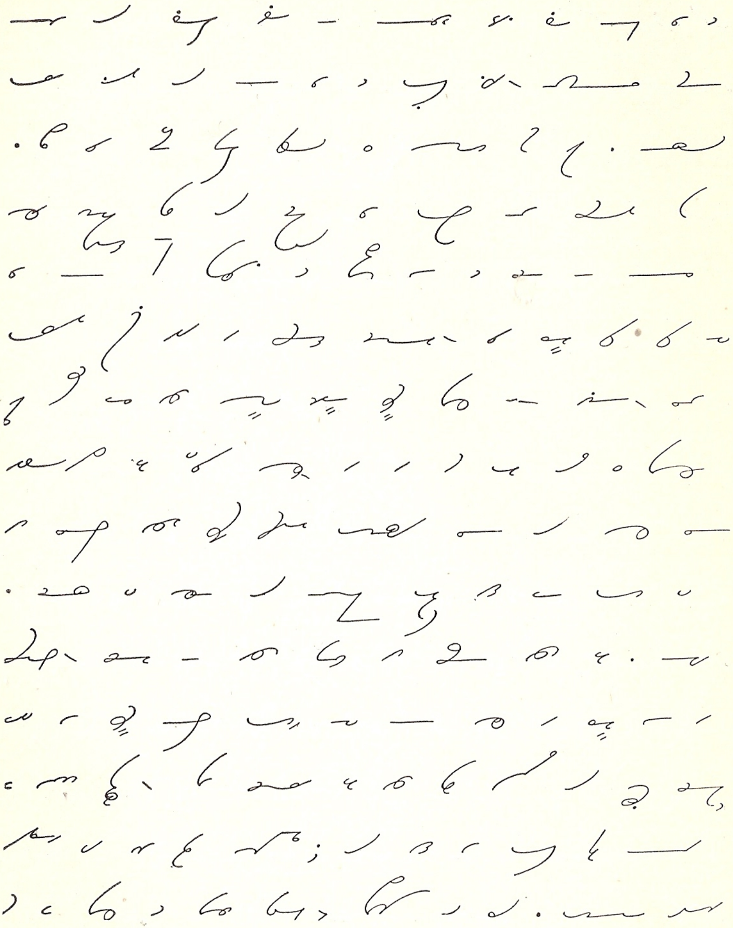


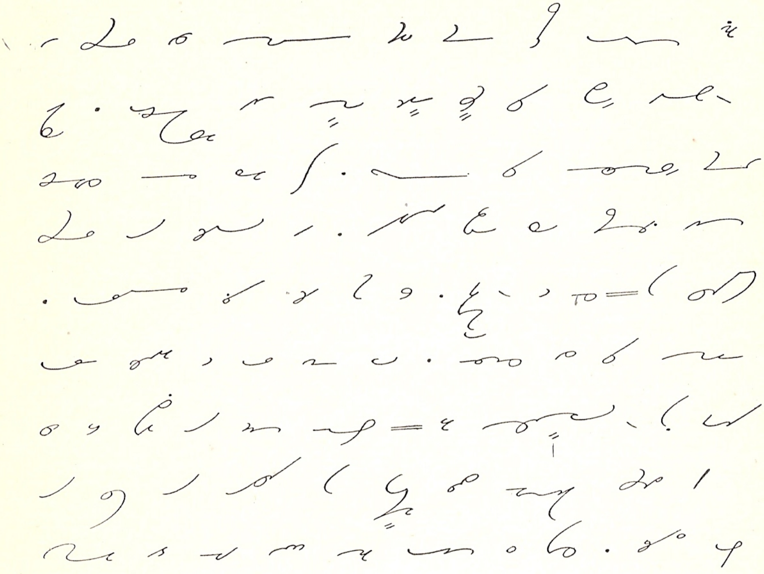


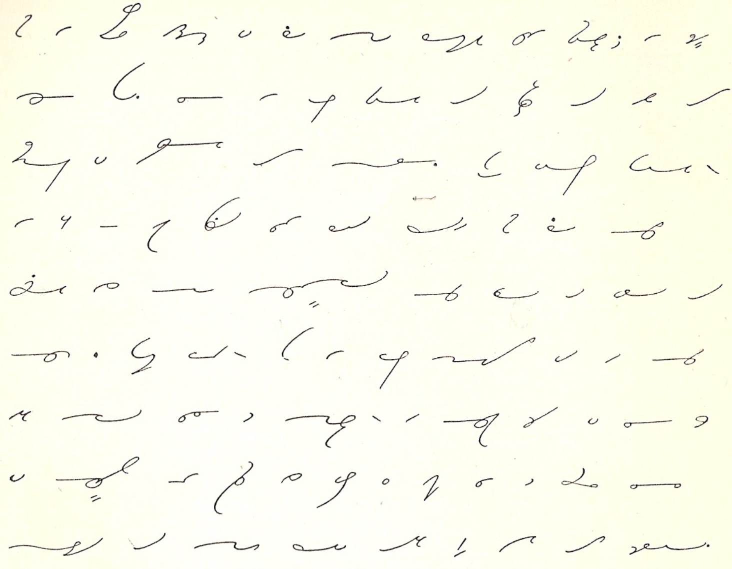


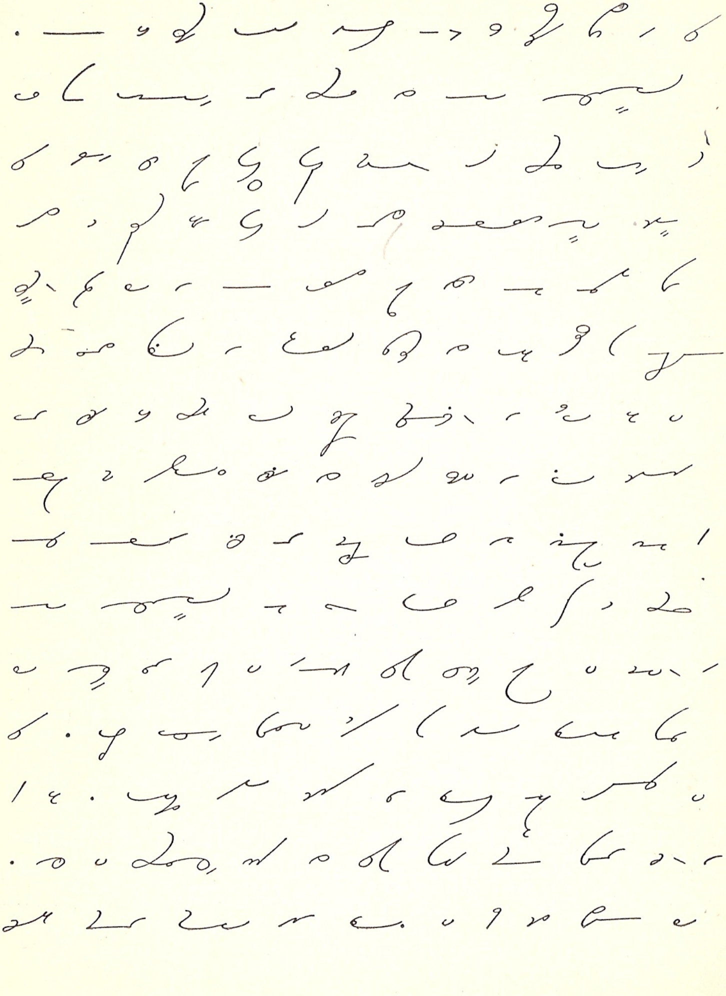


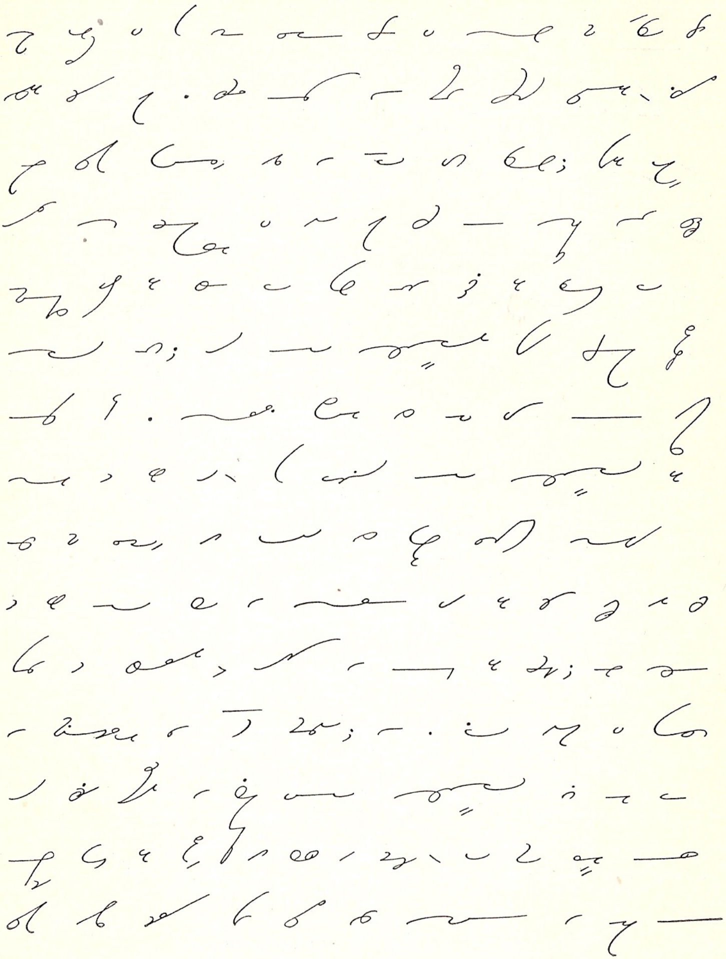


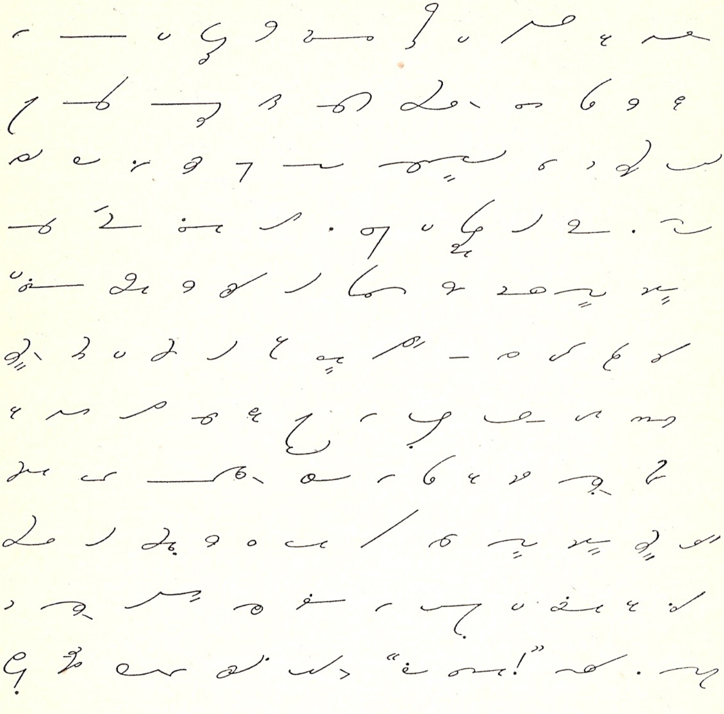


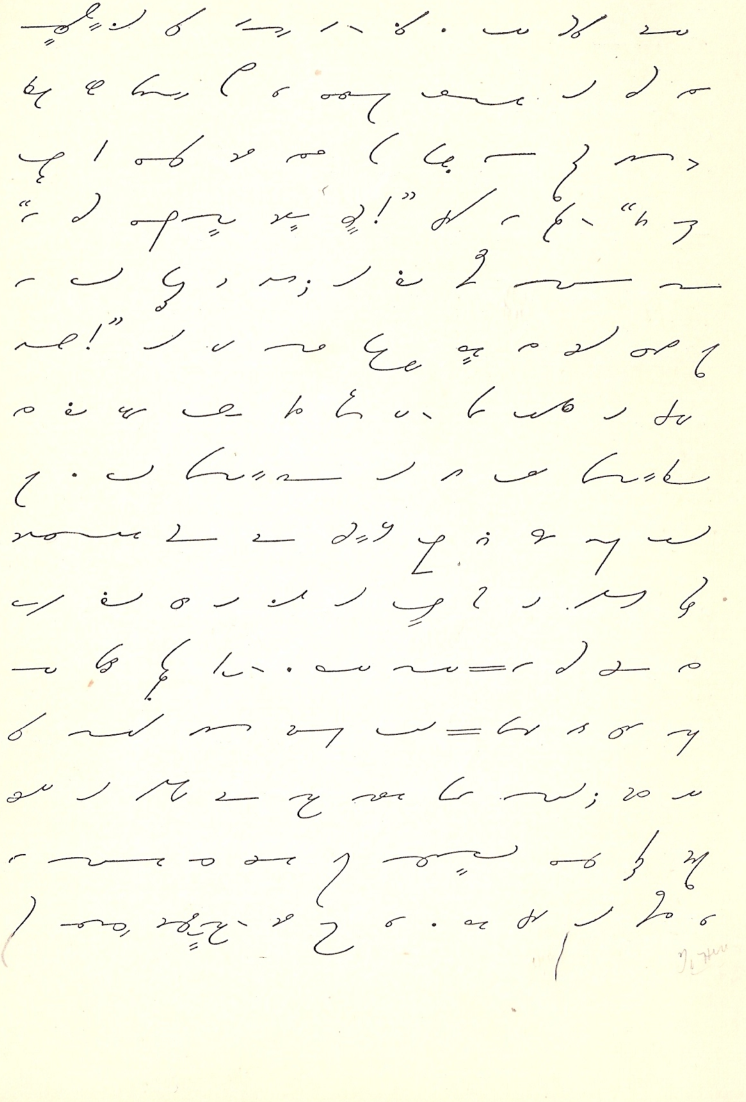


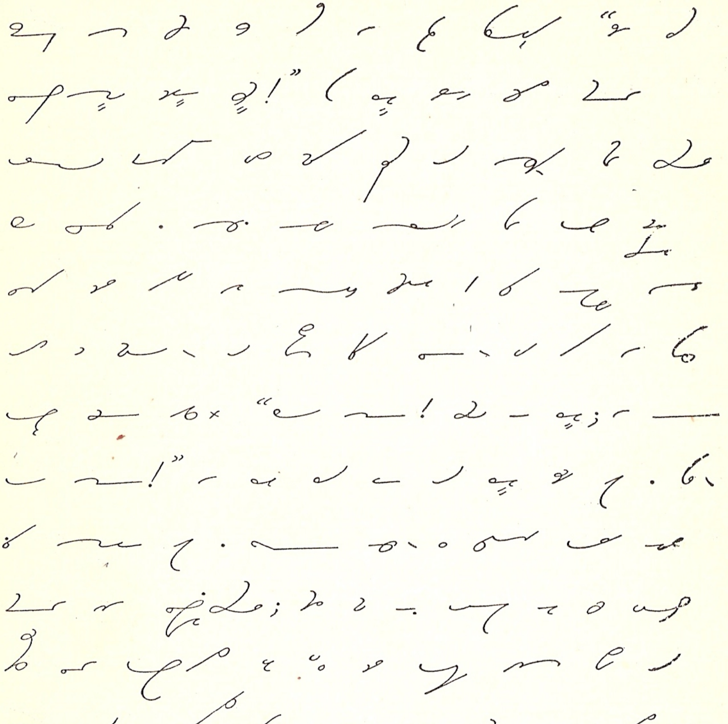


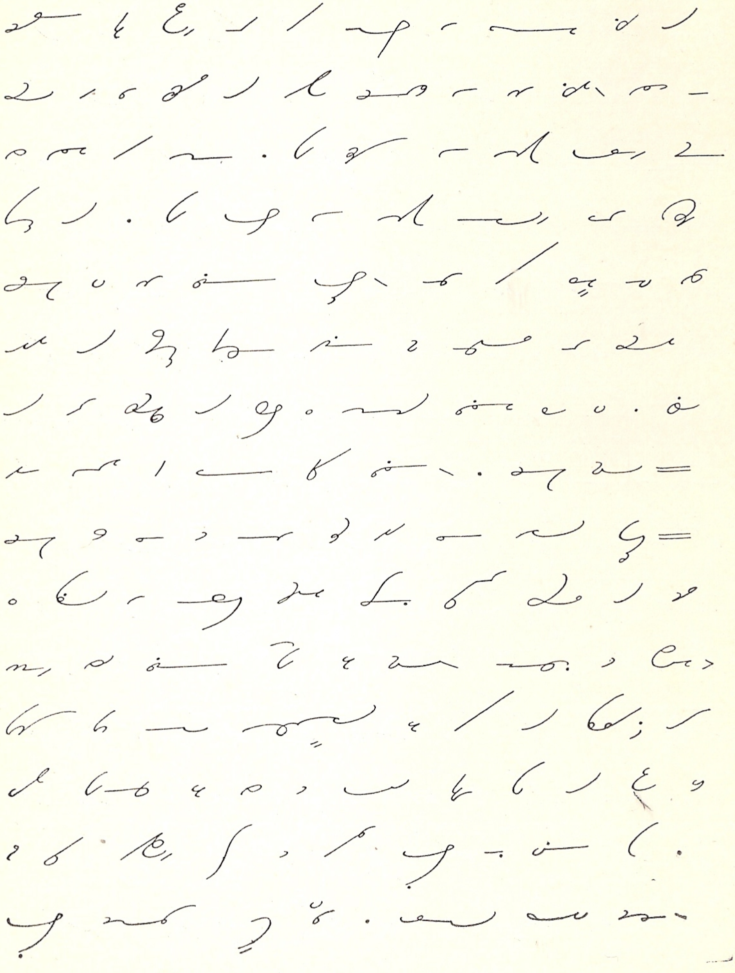


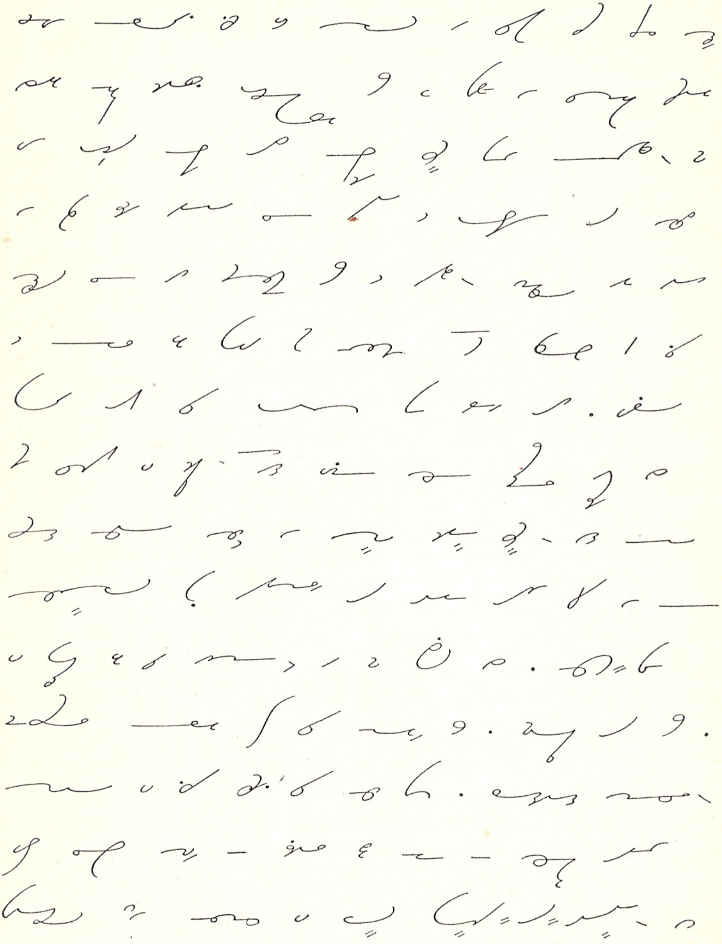


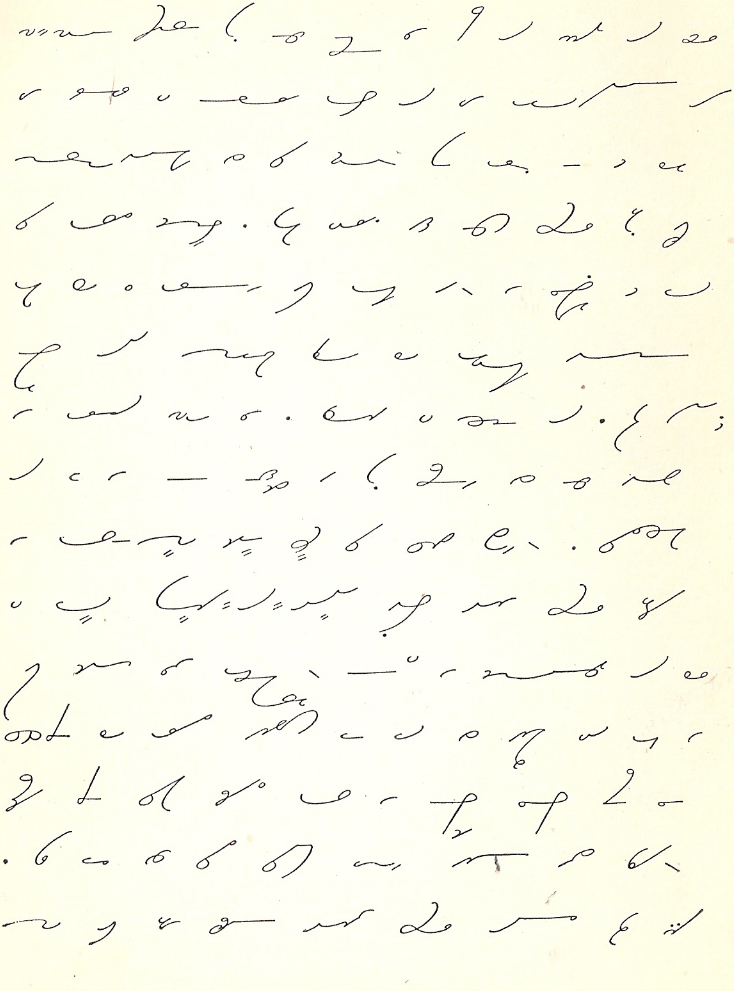


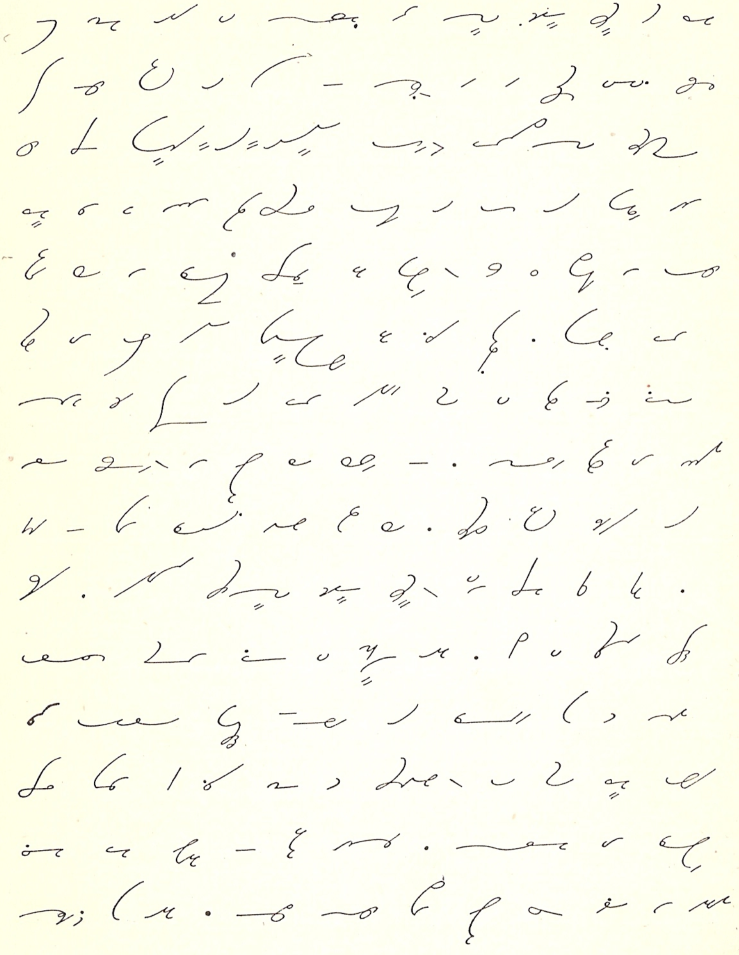


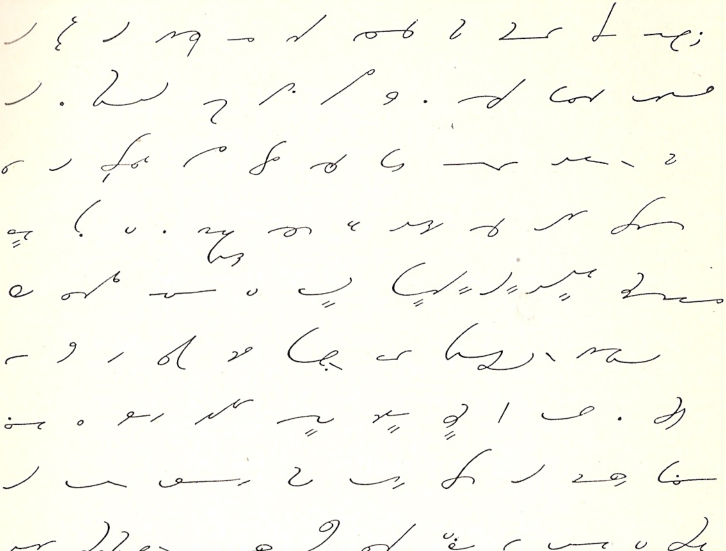


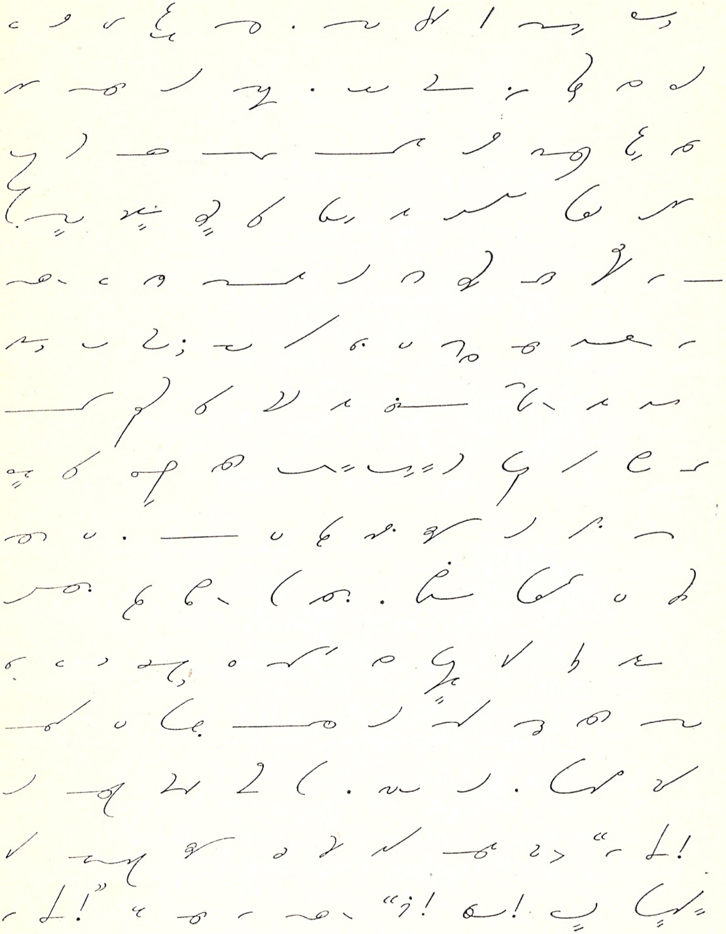


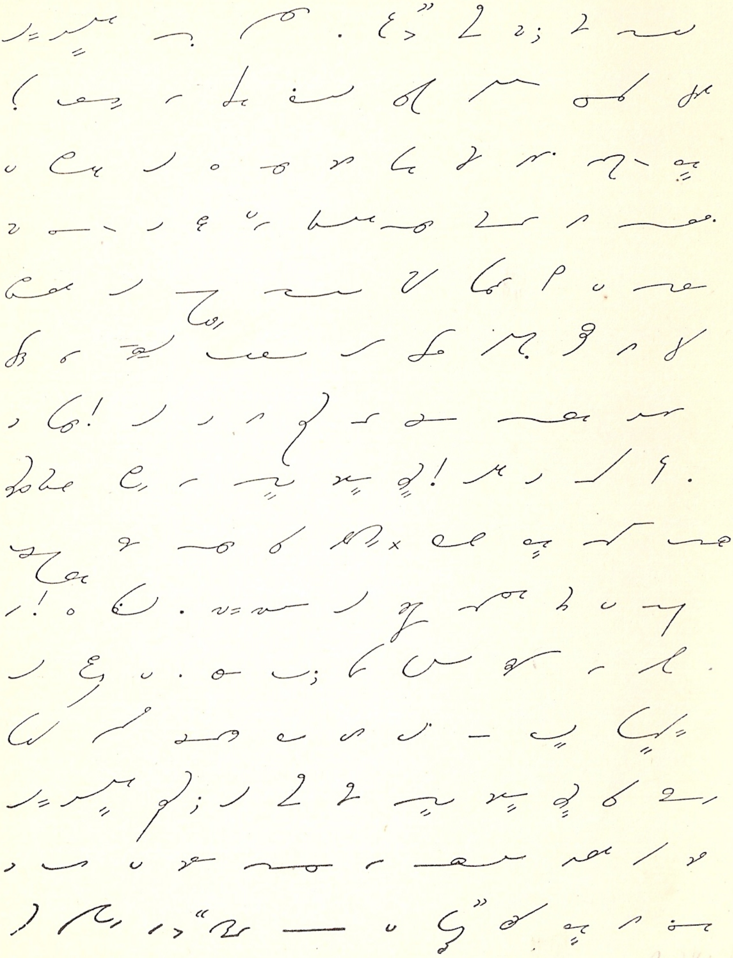


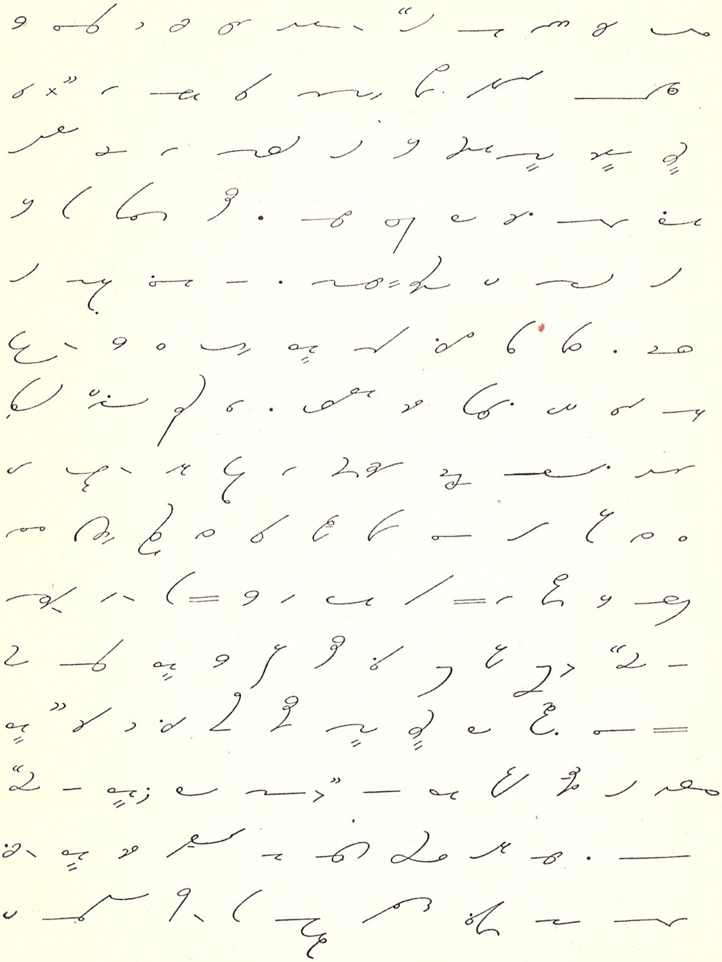


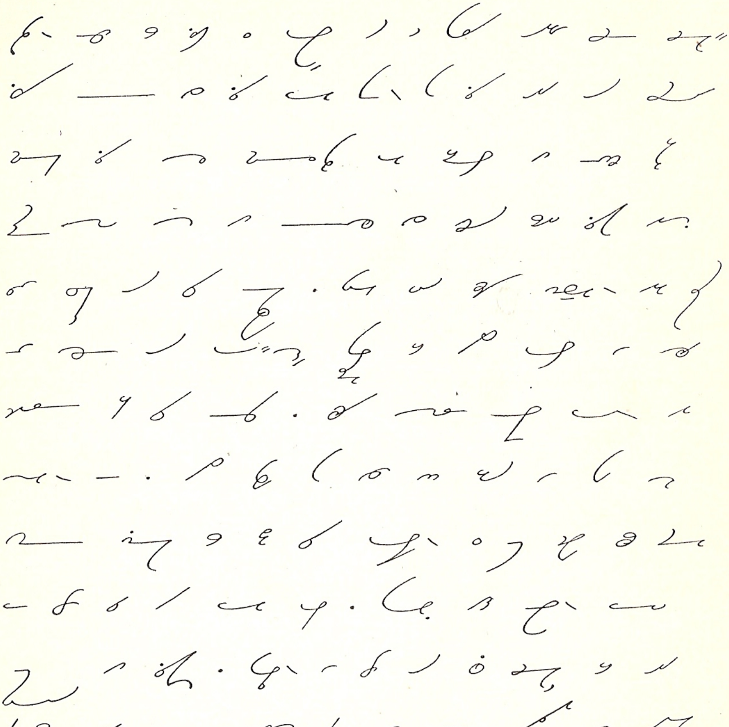


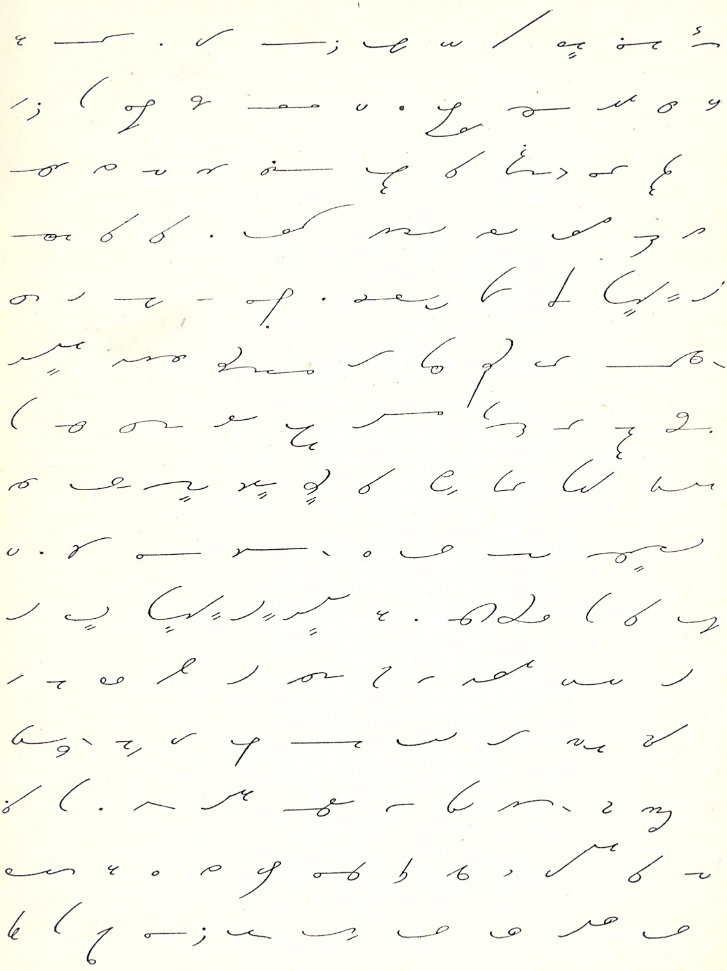


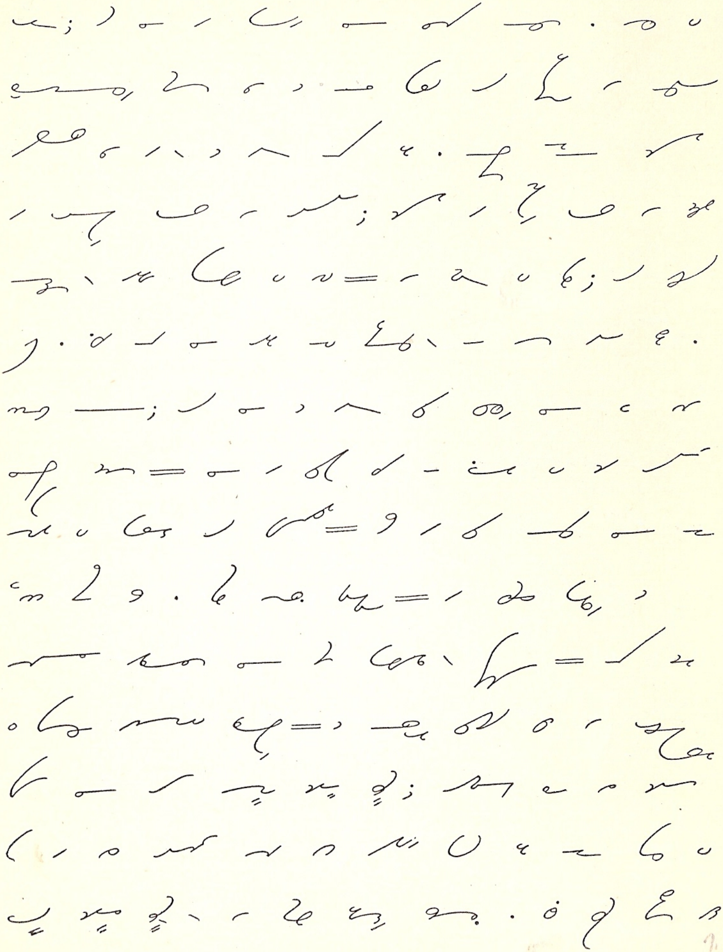












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